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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY



SUNDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

MONDAY:
ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

TUESDAY:
JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY:
EDDIE KROON
SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm

KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm

THURSDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

FRIDAY:
RICKY THOMAS
GUITARIST
7:00 - 9:00pm

SATURDAY:
EDDIE KROON
SINGER
4:00 - 6:00pm

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

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HHS to lose thousands of workers under Trump administration probationary job cuts

By MIKE STOBBE and CARLA K. JOHNSON

Associated Press

Department of Health and Human Services officials expect most of the agency's roughly 5,200 probationary employees to be fired Friday under the Trump administration's move to get rid of nearly all probationary employees, according to an audio recording of a National Institutes of Health department meeting.

In that meeting, an NIH office director told employees that some probationary staff with specialized skills might be spared. Probationary staff being terminated would receive an email Friday afternoon, according to audio shared with The Associated Press.

Among those being cut are nearly 1,300 probationary employees at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention roughly one-tenth of the agency's workforce. The Atlanta-based agency's leadership was notified of the decision Friday morning. The verbal notice came from HHS officials in a meeting with CDC leaders, according to a federal official who was at the meeting. The official was not authorized to discuss it and spoke to the AP on condi-



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is shown Sunday, March 15, 2020, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

tion of anonymity.

Some portion of the affected employees are supposed to receive four weeks paid administrative leave, according to the federal official and the recording.

HHS officials did not answer questions about the specifics of the layoffs. In an emailed statement, Andrew Nixon, the department's director of communications, wrote: "HHS is following the Administration's guidance and taking

action to support the President's broader efforts to restructure and streamline the federal government. This is to ensure that HHS better serves the American people at the highest and most efficient standard."

HHS employs more than 80,000 people and runs 13 supporting agencies. Besides the CDC, they include the NIH and the Food and Drug Administration. The department also provides health coverage for nearly half the country through

Medicare and Medicaid.

Its staff includes scientists, researchers, doctors and other officials. It oversees research of vaccines, diseases and cures. It regulates the medications found in medicine cabinets and inspects the foods that end up in cupboards.

With a \$9.2 billion core budget, the CDC is charged with protecting Americans from outbreaks and other public health threats. Before the cuts, the agency had about 13,000 employ-

ees, including more than 2,000 staff work in other countries.

Historically CDC has been seen as a global leader on disease control and a reliable source of health information, boasting some of the top experts in the world. The staff is heavy with scientists 60% have master's degrees or doctorates.

Those being fired included all first-year officers about 50 in total in the CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service, according to two agency employees who communicated with some of the affected staffers. The two spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity for fear of retribution.

The EIS, as it is known, was established in 1951 to recruit young doctors and researchers to join the agency for two-year stints as disease investigators. The laid-off first-year officers represent a little less than half the service's current staff.

EIS officers often are sent to different states and countries to become primary investigators of outbreaks and emerging health dangers. Many EIS graduates have gone on to leadership jobs at CDC and at other public health organizations. □

Trump calls for withholding federal money from schools and colleges that require COVID vaccines

By COLLIN BINKLEY
AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Schools, colleges and states that require students to be immunized against COVID-19 may be at risk of losing federal money under a White House order signed Friday by President Donald Trump.

The order is expected to have little national impact because COVID-19 vaccine mandates have mostly been dropped at schools and colleges across the United States, and many states have passed legislation forbidding such mandates. The order directs the Education Department

and Health and Human Services to create a plan to end vaccine mandates for

COVID-19. It isn't clear what money the plan would use as leverage. Most federal

education money is ordered by Congress.

It aims to fulfill a campaign promise from Trump, who often said he would "not give one penny to any school that has a vaccine mandate."

The order applies only to COVID-19 vaccines. All states have laws requiring that children attending schools be vaccinated against certain diseases including measles, mumps, polio, tetanus, whooping cough and chickenpox.

All U.S. states allow exemptions for children with medical conditions that prevent them from getting certain vaccines. Most also allow

exemptions for religious or other nonmedical reasons. Some colleges started requiring students to be immunized against COVID-19 during the pandemic, but most have dropped the requirements. A few continue to require vaccines at least for students living on campus, including Swarthmore and Oberlin colleges. Most of those colleges allow medical or religious exemptions. State-wide student vaccine mandates were rare. California planned to add COVID-19 to the list of required vaccines for K-12 students, but it wasn't enacted and was later dropped. □



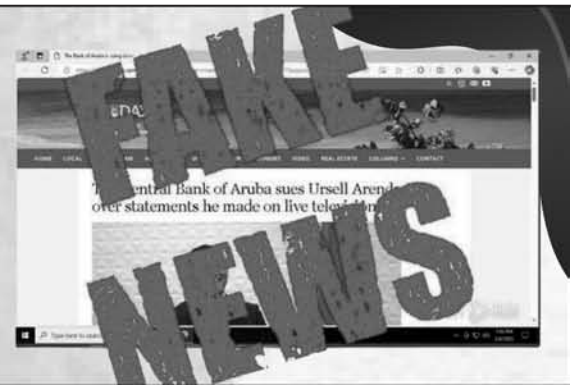
President Donald Trump points to a reporter and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a news conference in the East Room of the White House, Thursday, Feb. 13, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

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Treasury watchdog begins audit of Musk DOGE team's access to federal government's payment system

By **FATIMA HUSSEIN and JOSH BOAK**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Treasury Department's Office of Inspector General on Friday said it was launching an audit of the security controls for the federal government's payment system, after Democratic senators raised red flags about the access provided to Trump aide Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency team. The audit will also review the past two years of the system's transactions as it relates to Musk's assertion of "alleged fraudulent payments," according to a letter from Loren J. Scirba, Treasury's deputy inspector general, that was obtained by The Associated Press.

The audit marks part of the broader effort led by Democratic lawmakers and federal employee unions to provide transparency and accountability about



People listen to speakers during a rally against Elon Musk outside the Treasury Department in Washington, Tuesday, Feb. 4, 2025.

DOGE's activities under President Donald Trump's Republican administration. The Musk team has pushed for access to the government's computer systems and sought to remove tens

of thousands of federal workers.

"We expect to begin our fieldwork immediately," Scirba wrote. "Given the breadth of this effort, the audit will likely not be com-

pleted until August; however, we recognize the danger that improper access or inadequate controls can pose to the integrity of sensitive payment systems. As such, if critical issues come

Associated Press

to light before that time, we will issue interim updates and reports."

Treasury's inspector general began the audit before Democratic lawmakers asked for it. A. J. Altemus, acting counsel to the inspector general, said "our work is independently initiated" and standards dictate that the audit "must be non-partisan and objective. These standards remain unchanged."

Tech billionaire Musk, who continues to control Tesla, X and SpaceX among other companies, claims to be finding waste, fraud and abuse while providing savings to taxpayers, many of his claims so far unsubstantiated. But there is a risk that his team's aggressive efforts could lead to the failure of government computer systems and enable Musk and his partners to profit off private information maintained by the government. □

Helicopter crew in collision with plane may not have heard key instruction from tower, NTSB says



Salvage crews pull up a part of a Black Hawk helicopter near the site in the Potomac River of a mid-air collision between an American Airlines jet and a Black Hawk helicopter at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2025, in Arlington, Va.

Associated Press

By **GARY FIELDS and TIM SULLIVAN**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The crew of the helicopter that collided midair with an American Airlines jet near Washington D.C.'s Ronald Reagan National Airport might not have heard instructions from the air traffic controller to pass behind the plane, investigators said Friday.

National Transportation Safety Board Chairwoman Jennifer Homendy said the recording from the Black Hawk helicopter cockpit suggests the crew may have missed the key instruction just before the Jan. 29 collision, in which all 67 aboard the two aircraft were killed.

Homendy said the helicopter was on a check flight that night when the pilot was being tested on the use of night vision goggles and flying by instruments. Investi-

gators believe the crew was wearing night vision goggles throughout the flight.

The collision was the deadliest plane crash in the U.S. since 2001, when a jet slammed into a New York City neighborhood just after takeoff, killing all 260 people on board and five more on the ground.

Homendy said the Black Hawk crew never heard the words "pass behind the" during the transmission from the controller because the helicopter's microphone key was depressed right then.

At one point during the flight before the collision the helicopter's pilot called out that the Black Hawk was at 300 feet, but the instructor pilot said the helicopter was at 400 feet, Homendy said.

"At this time we don't know why there was a discrepancy between the two," Homendy said. □

Homeowner pleads guilty to shooting Black teen Ralph Yarl who rang the wrong doorbell

By **HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH**

Associated Press

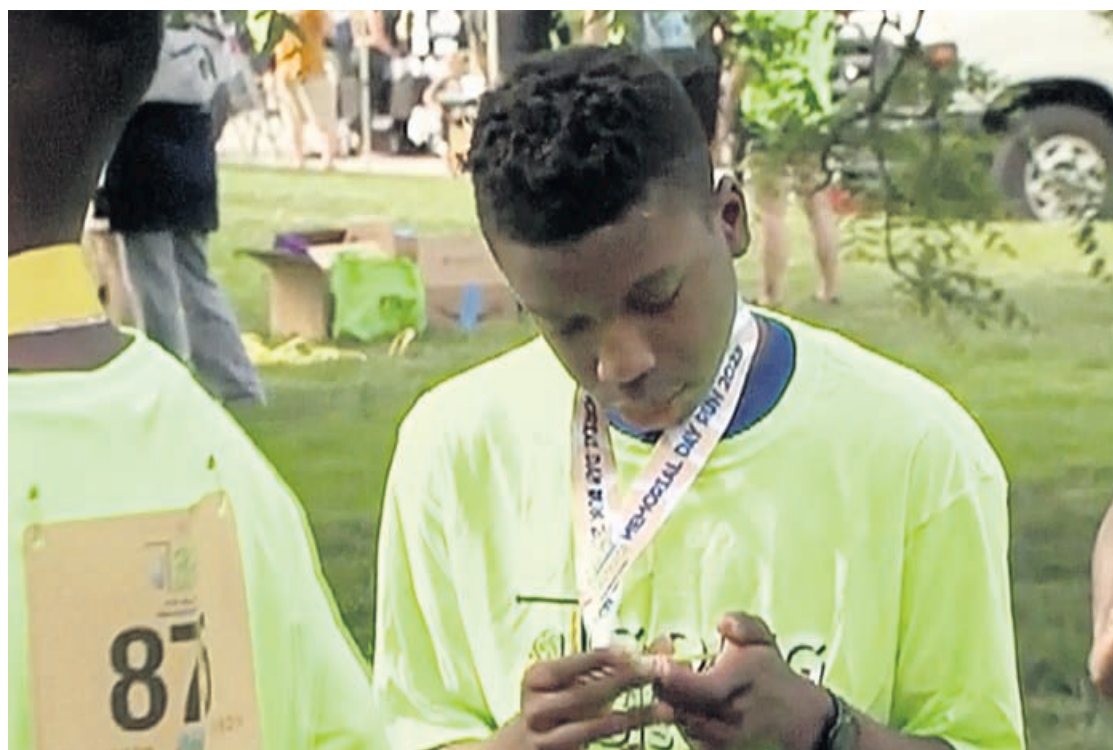
LIBERTY, Mo. (AP) — An 86-year-old Kansas City man pleaded guilty Friday to a lesser charge in the 2023 shooting of Ralph Yarl, a Black honor student who rang the white man's doorbell by mistake.

Andrew Lester was scheduled to stand trial next week on charges of first-degree assault and armed criminal action in the shooting of the then-16-year-old, who survived and is now a freshman at Texas A&M, where he is a member of ROTC and the school's marching band.

As part of a plea deal, Lester pleaded guilty to second-degree assault, a charge that Judge David Chamberlain said carried a sentence of one to seven years. Lester, who will be sentenced on March 7, was hunched over as he was wheeled into the courtroom, his hands folded.

Yarl and his mother, Cleo Nagbe, sat in the front row during the hearing.

In a statement issued after Lester's plea, Nagbe thanked her family's supporters who "saw Ralph's



Ralph Yarl looks at a badge that he received after walking at a brain injury awareness event, May 29, 2023, in Kansas City, Mo.

humanity, and rejected a world where fear and prejudice endanger innocent lives."

"While this marks a step toward accountability, true justice requires consequences that reflect the severity of his actions anything less would be a failure to recognize the harm he has caused," she said.

Under the first-degree assault charge, Lester was facing a potential sen-

tence of between 15 and 30 years behind bars, depending on the circumstances. One of the key elements of second-degree assault is that defendants "have the burden of injecting the issue of influence of sudden passion arising from adequate cause."

"This is probably perceived as some middle ground, and the heat of passion would be what was the motivation for the shooting,"

said J.R. Hobbs, a Kansas City defense attorney who is not involved in the case. "If he was afraid or whatever, it may not rise to a full defense. The parties might agree to that because on one hand, it's a felony conviction no trial, no possible appeal. On the other hand, with a lesser statutory limit, the defendant's exposure is less as well."

Yarl showed up on Lester's doorstep on the night

of April 13, 2023, after he mixed up the streets where he was supposed to pick up his twin siblings.

Lester's attorney, Steve Salmon, has long argued that Lester was acting in self-defense and that he was terrified by the stranger who knocked on his door as he settled into bed. Authorities say Lester shot Yarl twice: first in the head, then in the arm.

The shooting shocked the country and renewed national debate about gun policies and race in the U.S. Yarl testified at an earlier hearing that he rang the bell and then waited for someone to answer for what seemed "longer than normal." As the inner door opened, Yarl said, he reached out to grab the storm door.

"I assume these are my brothers' friends' parents," he said.

He said Lester shot him in the head and uttered, "Don't come here ever again." Although the bullet didn't penetrate Yarl's brain, the impact knocked him to the ground. Yarl said Lester then shot him in the arm. The teen was taken to the hospital and released three days later. □

Associated Press

Annexing Canada? At Niagara Falls, Trump's idea gets eye rolls but not support

By **MIKE HOUSEHOLDER and JONATHAN J. COOPER**

Associated Press

NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y. (AP)

At Niagara Falls, the iconic honeymoon and tourist

destination on the U.S.-Canadian border, visitors from both countries took in President Donald Trump's unsolicited suggestion that the U.S. annex its neighbor

to the north with an air of detached amusement. Do they take the idea seriously? Generally speaking, no. But some citizens of both nations wonder why it's necessary to pick a fight with one of America's closest allies when there wasn't much friction there to begin with.

"We're allies," said Shannon Robinson, of Milton, Ontario.

"We love you guys. And we're proud of the amicable relationship we have. But we're also proud to be distinct."

Trump's idea is bold, offensive and ignorant, but "he can say what he wants,

and it's actually bringing Canadians together right now," said Robinson, standing on the Niagara Falls Observation Tower, which extends over the Niagara Gorge and affords an unobstructed view of all three falls and the Niagara River.

In some instances, that togetherness involved booing. The response was slightly more muted on a recent day as bundled-up tourists from all over the world braved sub-freezing temperatures to catch a glimpse of the majestic falls.

Jeremy Powers, of Panama City, Florida, said

the Republican U.S. president's talk of annexing one of America's closest allies and trading partners is "very weird."

"Having that as their own independent nation needs to be maintained, I feel," said Powers, who was in New York state on a work trip and decided to check out Niagara Falls.

"You know, we don't need to try and manifest destiny and gather more land. We need to partner and work with other countries in a more friendly manner," Powers said before dropping down on one knee to open up a bag containing his camera equipment. □



Vapor rises from Niagara Falls Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2025, in Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Associated Press

Europe quietly works on a plan to send troops to Ukraine for post-war security

By LORNE COOK
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Increasingly alarmed that U.S. security priorities lie elsewhere, a group of European countries has been quietly working on a plan to send troops into Ukraine to help enforce any future peace settlement with Russia.

Britain and France are at the forefront of the effort, though details remain scarce. The countries involved in the discussions are reluctant to tip their hand and give Russian President Vladimir Putin an edge should he agree to negotiate an end to the war he launched three years ago.

What is clear is that Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy needs a guarantee that his country's security will be assured until peace takes hold. The best protection would be the NATO membership that Ukraine has long been promised, but the U.S. has taken that option off the table.

"I won't get into the particular capabilities, but I do accept that if there is peace then there needs to be some sort of security guarantee for Ukraine and the U.K. will play its part in that," British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said in cautious remarks on Thursday. The Europeans began exploring what kind of force might be needed about a year ago, but the sense of urgency has grown amid concern that U.S. President Donald Trump might go over their heads, and possibly even Ukraine's, to clinch a deal with Putin.

Many questions remain unanswered but one stands out: what role, if any, might the United States play?

European powers consider the road ahead

In December, after Trump was elected but before he took office, a group of leaders and ministers huddled with Zelenskyy at NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte's residence in Brussels. They came from Britain, Denmark, France,



Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, center, and other dignitaries, attend an international ceremony to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day, Thursday, June 6, 2024, in Normandy.

Associated Press

Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland. Top European Union officials attended too.

The talks built on an idea promoted by French President Emmanuel Macron in early 2024. At the time his refusal to rule out putting troops on the ground in Ukraine prompted an outcry, notably from the leaders of Germany and Poland. Macron appeared isolated on the European stage, but his plan has gained traction since.

Still, much about what the force might look like and who will take part will depend on the terms of any peace settlement, and more.

Italy has constitutional limits on the use of its forces. The Netherlands would need a greenlight from its parliament, as would Germany, whose position could evolve after the Feb. 23 elections usher in a new government. Poland is cautious, given lingering animosities with Ukraine that date from World War II.

A robust security force rather than peacekeepers The makeup and role of the force will be dictated by the kind of peace deal that's reached. If Russia and Ukraine can agree terms as the negotiations progress, it's plausible that fewer security precautions

and a smaller force would be needed.

But experts and officials warn that, as things stand, the Europeans must deploy a robust and sizeable contingent, rather than a team of peacekeepers like United Nations "blue helmets." "It has to be a real force (so) that the Russians know that if they ever tested it that they would get crushed. And you can be sure that Russia will test it," Ben Hodges, the former Commanding General of U.S. Army Europe, said last month at a European Policy Centre think tank event. "They violate every single agreement. So if we send

a force in there, they've got to have airpower, large land forces, drones, counter-drones, air and missile defense. All of that," he said. "If they go in there with a bunch of blue helmets and rifles, they will get crushed."

Retired French General Dominique Trinquand, a former head of France's military mission at the United Nations, agreed that U.N. peacekeepers are better suited "for deployment in zones that are far more stable."

"For starters, mounting this operation with soldiers taken from across the world would take about a year,"

he said.

How big a force?

The nature of the peace deal will determine the size and location of the European contingent. Zelenskyy has insisted on at least 100,000 to 150,000 troops. Media reports have speculated about a 30,000-40,000 strong force. Diplomats and officials have not confirmed either figure.

Ukraine also wants air support, not just boots on the ground.

What is clear is that the Europeans would struggle to muster a large-scale force, and certainly could not do it quickly.

In an interview on Friday with the Financial Times, Macron said that the idea of deploying a huge force is "far-fetched."

"We have to do things that are appropriate, realistic, well thought, measured and negotiated," he said.

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth insisted this week on "robust international oversight of the line of contact," a reference to the roughly 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) long front line. The Europeans are reluctant as that would require too many troops.

Nearly all agree that some kind of "American backstop" is essential. European armed forces have long relied on superior U.S. logistics, air transport and other military capabilities. □



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Bristling at 'Gulf of Mexico' name change on maps, Mexico says it might sue Google

By **FABIOLA SÁNCHEZ**

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said Thursday that her government wouldn't rule out filing a civil lawsuit against Google if it maintains its stance of calling the stretch of sea between northeastern Mexico and the southeastern United States the "Gulf of America."

The area, long named the Gulf of Mexico across the world, has gained a geopolitical spotlight after President Donald Trump declared he would change the Gulf's name.

Sheinbaum, in her morning news conference, said the president's decree is restricted to the "continental shelf of the United States" because Mexico still controls much of the Gulf. "We have sovereignty over our continental shelf," she said. Sheinbaum said that despite the fact that her government sent a letter to Google saying that the company was "wrong" and that "the entire Gulf of Mexico cannot be called



President Claudia Sheinbaum waves as she arrives for a Housing for Wellbeing event, a government-funded home improvement program, in Mexico City, Saturday, Feb. 1, 2025.

Associated Press

the Gulf of America," the company has insisted on maintaining the nomenclature.

It was not immediately clear where such a suit would be filed.

Google reported last month on its X account, formerly Twitter, that it maintains a "long-standing practice of applying name

changes when they have been updated in official government sources."

As of Thursday, how the Gulf appeared on Google Maps was dependent on the user's location and other data.

If the user is in the United States, the body of water appeared as Gulf of America. If the user was physi-

cally in Mexico, it would appear as the Gulf of Mexico. In many other countries across the world it appears as "Gulf of Mexico (Gulf of America)."

Sheinbaum has repeatedly defended the name Gulf of Mexico, saying its use dates to 1607 and is recognized by the United Nations.

She has also mentioned

that, according to the constitution of Apatzingán, the antecedent to Mexico's first constitution, the North American territory was previously identified as "Mexican America".

Sheinbaum has used the example to poke fun at Trump and underscore the international implications of changing the Gulf's name. In that sense, Sheinbaum said on Thursday that the Mexican government would ask Google to make "Mexican America" pop up on the map when searched.

This is not the first time Mexicans and Americans have disagreed on the names of key geographic areas, such as the border river between Texas and the Mexican states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León and Tamaulipas. Mexico calls it Rio Bravo and for the United States it is the Rio Grande.

This week, the White House barred Associated Press reporters from several events, including some in the Oval Office, saying it was because of the news agency's policy on the name. □

Australian and Philippine police help would-be victims avoid online love scams on Valentine's Day

MANILA, Philippines (AP)

— Australian and Philippine authorities took steps on Valentine's Day to help would-be victims avoid hurting their "hearts and bank accounts" in online love scams.

The Australian Federal Po-

lice, with the help of Filipino authorities, on Friday publicized online dialogues used by an online love scam syndicate, which had been dismantled in the Philippines, to help foster vigilance.

"The Australian Federal Po-

lice is flipping the script on romance scammers this Valentine's Day by revealing real-life dialogue used to target the bank accounts and hearts of thousands of potential victims online," a joint statement by the Australian police, the Philippine Anti-Organized Crime Commission and other law enforcement agencies said.

Philippine authorities raided the syndicate's hideout near Manila in October, arrested more than 250 mostly Chinese suspected members and seized computers and other gadgets used in the online fraud.

After an investigation, Australian and Philippine police found the syndicate had attempted to victimize about 5,000 people in Australia alone. They were

trying to check if those Australians have already been defrauded, Australian Federal Police officer Kathleen Oehlers said in a news conference in Manila with Philippine anti-crime officials. About \$15 million have been lost to such online love scams from victims in Australia last year alone, according to Oehlers.

Under the scheme, the suspects would hunt for potential victims, mostly fully employed males, in online dating apps and then use romantic dialogues to develop a whirlwind romance online. A victim would later be encouraged by a scammer under cover of a fake picture and identity to invest in cryptocurrency, initially with relatively small amounts, before shifting the funds to the syndicate's

account, Oehlers said.

Philippine Undersecretary Gilbert Cruz, who heads the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission, said that aside from publicizing the dialogues used by the syndicate to lure and defraud victims, the Australian police also provided crucial tips online. They included being wary of red flags like "overly affectionate behavior," he said.

Philippine authorities would take similar steps to foster vigilance, Cruz said.

"The scammer would portray a kind-hearted Filipino woman living in Australia or a local female resident in the Philippines, heartbroken by an ex-fiance who wanted my money, not my love," the statement said. □



Undersecretary Gilbert Cruz of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission, left, and Kathleen Oehlers of the Australian Federal Police attend a press conference in Manila, Philippines, Friday, Feb 14, 2025.

Associated Press

Did you know about... Basic driving rules on Aruba (part 1)

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.



Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to

the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the highway before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky

to navigate...

Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confused among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is

used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

"Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located near the Talk of the Town hotel, west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! □



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Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
Treasure Cove | El Patio Tacos & Tequila | M8 Boutique
Fusion Restaurant, Tapas, Wine & Piano Bar

A brief history of the California Light House

(Oranjestad)—At the furthest western point of the island, there lies the tallest structure on the island: The California Light House. Standing on top of a limestone cliff, this lighthouse oversees the entire island, offering one of few best views of the island and the surrounding sea. It is also one of the few monuments that hold a rich history.

The lighthouse was constructed in between 1914-1916, and its first keeper was a young trained lighthouse keeper from Curacao names Jacob Jacobs. Mr. Frederico Fingal was the last man to have occupied this position until 1962. Though his son, Mr. Romulo Fingal did not continue in his father's footsteps, he does have a special connection to the lighthouse. He sat down with our reporter and shared a bit of its history.

As Mr. Fingal explains, "In 1915, cargo donkeys were hired from Figaroa di Noord to help build the Lighthouse at Westpunt. The donkeys had to walk along the beach all the way to Westpunt carrying the cargo, poles, cement, and all these things. At that time, it was a difficult task until Aruba got its first truck. These things reflect how people could have accomplished this tremendous job with so little." Mr. Fingal said, "At that time, it wasn't a place for people to work. It was very challenging because it was full of goats and donkeys, and it was very isolated. There were no hotels or roads to get there. There was only a donkey trail. Those were the only means of transportation."

Mr. Fingal continues, "In 1939, I was born in the lighthouse, and my fa-

ther was the last lighthouse keeper until he retired in 1962. After that, they removed the power cables all the way to the top. According to the story, we couldn't have the light ourselves because they dismantled it, and after many years, I heard that it is in a train museum in San Nicolas, where we found this very special lens that, when the light shines through it, it reaches 30 kilometers out to sea." Mr. Fingal told our reporter.

The lighthouse has a long and very interesting history. The reason why the lighthouse was built, according to Mr. Fingal, dates back to the day when the cargo ship S.S. California sank because of the lack of light. In 1913, Aruba made a request to Curacao to build a Lighthouse at Westpunt, and the governor of Curacao responded to Aruba to come back in 1915 with a well-detailed plan. "During the First World War from 1914 to 1918, they had to wait for the light to be transported to Aruba because it was manufactured in France. At that time, there was no electricity, and the light was very interesting because it rotated with a kerosene lamp that planes used; clean kerosene," Mr. Fingal said.

Mr. Fingal discovered something very interesting about the lighthouse after much research was documented in his book 'History of the Lighthouse at Westpunt.' He found many details: "I found out that the height of the lighthouse was due to the absence of electricity. There was also the presence of coral. There is a long steel cable from where the light is, and under the light, at the highest point, there is a hanging weight, a sort of pendulum that swings like that, with a weight that measures about 1 meter by 30 centimeters wide, which is a block of solid iron



attached to a cable. When you release it upwards, it comes down, and the weight that comes down pulls it up, gradually. And while it comes down, the same weight that is descending causes many small wheels to turn in the opposite direction. The Lighthouse rotates from 6 pm in the evening, when the sun sets, until 6 am in the morning. During the entire night, the light shines on the lantern, it goes down 24 meters, and the Lighthouse is 30 meters high. It is designed not to collapse," Mr. Fingal explains.

Mr. Fingal further explains that in one night, the lighthouse rotates 4,320 times and consumes one gallon of kerosene for the whole operation. "At that time, the kerosene was supplied from the Lago refinery. Every day it was brought down, and to start the light again, they had to lift the weight up, so our job as children was to crank it and raise the weight back up in the evening when the light stuck, they would take it down again, and the light stayed down. That's how it worked for a very long time," Mr. Fingal explains.

Thanks to the Monument Fund Aruba, which worked hard and is currently in charge of the Lighthouse, Mr. Fingal is very happy with its preservation, along with all the renovations that have taken place. He hopes that the story of the lighthouse will continue to live on for future generations. □



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A quick history of the Jouvart Morning Parade



(Oranjestad)—This morning around 3am, while most people were probably sound asleep, the streets of San Nicolas came alive for its annual Jouvart Morning Parade, an essential and highly anticipated parade in every annual carnival season, and one that holds a special place in the hearts of locals, especially those living in San Nicolas.

The Jouvart Morning Parade, or just "Jouvay", starts in the middle of the night, usually around 3am, and goes on until the break of dawn. Over the years, Jouvay has not

only become a staple in the carnival season, but it has also become one of the few parades that hold a significant cultural meaning for the locals, especially those living in San Nicolas. Here is a quick history lesson on the origins of Jouvay and why it is beloved by many on the island.

The tradition of Jouvay, much like the tradition of carnival in general, has its roots in immigration. Immigrants from other Caribbean islands like Trinidad and Tobago brought this tradition to the streets of San Nicolas, where the community living there—mostly comprised of Afro-Caribbean immigrants due to the industrial boom in the district during the early 20th century—held these "jump-up" parties, complete with steel pan and calypso music.

As the story goes, Jouvay was started on St. Maarten street in San Nicolas, with people bringing



home-made instruments like pans, buckets, milk tins etc. to play and dance on the street. Nowadays, people also refer to Jouvay as the pajama party parade, as people can just come and join wearing comfortable, regular clothes. Jouvay is the only parade in the car-

nival season where everyone is welcome to join the march and dance, accompanied by a either one or two bands performing Soca music. □

Picture credits: Aruba.com

Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Emerald Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits,



loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

**The honorees were:
Emerald Ambassadors**

Mr. Jim & Mrs. Kathy Enders from Kittanning, Pennsylvania, United States.

Ms. Keyttin Silva representing the Aruba Tourism

Authority, and staff members of Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honoree was:

- Aruba's weather
- Many friends on the island and friendly people
- Love the people at the hotel and the privacy at the hotel
- Love the view from the hotel of to the Cruise ships
- Aruba's safety

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □

Don't forget to visit Aruba's famous Red Anchor

At the south east coast of the island, standing alone on a windswept and barren land stands a popular Aruba landmark – a large anchor. It overlooks the sea just beyond, watching over the shipping lanes. It stands there in memory and in honor of all seamen who have lost their life at sea.

Where to Find the Anchor?

The anchor is a “must see” landmark when you visit Aruba. It is among the most photographed historical landmarks for the island. You want to make sure you add this stop on your itinerary when your visiting the south coast of Aruba. The bright red anchor against the backdrop of the deep blue Caribbean sea and the azure blue skies, make a great backdrop for your vacation pictures.

The anchor is located at the entrance to Gate 6 to the former Lago Colony. It is on the outskirts of Seroe Colorado, on the south east point of the island at the “T” junction to Baby Beach.

Depending on where you are staying on the island, follow the signs that indicate the way to Baby Beach. Once you reach the T-junction, it will be right in front of you.

About the Anchor

Size
It will be hard to miss the anchor, it's huge! The anchor that weighs 21,772 kilos, is approximately 10 feet 6 inches wide and 15 feet, 6 inches tall.

On the anchor there are some numbers. The 4112 and 4115, which are believed to be the serial numbers that refer to the “fluke” or horizontal and vertical parts of the anchor, respectively. The number 21772K refers to the weight of the anchor in kilos.

This type of anchor was manufactured by Hoesch Dortmund Horde, at a foundry located in Germany.

Where did the Anchor Come From?

There are a number of stories as to the origins of the anchor, which one do you think it was? (Unfortunately the mystery has never been solved, so your imagination can pick which one you think it might be!)

Story 1:

“According to Mr. Manuel M. Curiel, an ex-Lago Tug Captain, a fully laden VLCC (Very Large Crude Carrier) was seeking a mooring at the 15-mile anchorage, known as Bara, on the southern part of



The Red Anchor situated at the entrance of former Lago Colony in San Nicolas

the island. This is the usual shallow mooring location for ships awaiting orders, etc. The weather was rough with strong current. The normal procedure is that they would walk out three shackles (about 90 feet) until the anchor touches the bottom while the chain must rest on the bottom. Subsequently, they will walk out some extra shackles and when the ship starts to swing or lean on one side, the anchor is properly set. Because of the rough weather, unfortunately they did not get the time to walk out the extra tackles and because of the tension exerted on the winch, it broke, and they lost the anchor and its chain.”

Story 2:

“Mr. Curiel also said that at one time a small tanker with a Korean crew, while lifting their anchor also lifted another anchor near the inner harbor. When the ship asked for assistance, he went with his tugboat along with a barge, to help. But eventually they had to cut the chain and let the anchor go to the bottom because they could not untangle them.”

How Did The Anchor Become a Landmark?

Sometime between 1980 and 1985, three gentlemen (Mr. Wim Martinus – the Harbormaster of Aruba;

Mr. August Genser – the ex-Division Superintendent of Lago's Laboratory; and Mr. Willie Davis – Owner of Filtec at Zeewijk in San Nicolas), were having a conversation with Mr. Charlie Brouns Jr. at his famous Charlie's Bar and Restaurant in San Nicolas. Charlie, who was a visionary and had dreams for developing the San Nicolas area, told these gentlemen that he would like to come up with something innovative for the San Nicolas area to draw tourism to the area.

The “anchor”, which at that time was being stored at the Oranjestad harbor, was suggested as an option. Charlie liked the idea! He then contacted the President of Lago for permission to acquire the anchor. He was granted permission and the anchor was then relocated to its present location and dedicated “To All Seamen” on the occasion of the closing of the Lago Oil Refinery on March 31, 1985.

Through the Years

Through the years the Anchor was slowly weathering from the wind and salt. As time passed, sadly the origin and purpose of the anchor slowly faded away from people's memories.

After Charles Brouns Jr died on September 15, 2004, his friend Mr. Sam

Speziale, requested assistance from the management of Valero Aruba Refinery to help maintain the monument. The Valero Aruba Refinery, graciously sandblasted and painted the anchor and poured a concrete pad around it. On April 17, 2005, the anchor monument was rededicated “To All Seamen” in a formal ceremony in memory of Charles Brouns Jr.

Today, the anchor stands both as memorial to all seamen who have lost their lives at sea, but also as a silent reminder that Seroe Colorado is part of San Nicolas and that San Nicolas is still a vibrant and important part of the island of Aruba.

The Best Time to Visit

When your planning your visit to the south end of the island, you will want to include in your itinerary the many things to see and do there. The anchor will be just one of these stops, (keep an eye out for our future editions, we publish our recommendations!).

With that being said, I have to say, if you enjoy catching a sunrise, the anchor is one of the best places on the island to catch the sunrise. But in reality, anytime is a good time to visit, depending on your personal schedule. □

Aruba's cultural and literary development: Then and now

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban culture has seen many substantial developments over the course of a century. With the introduction of the Lago Refinery at the turn of the 20th century, followed by the breakout of the Second World War and the general incentive for political independence during the mid-century, a cultural identity on the island began to take form and have since developed through international and local influences.

In the pre-industrial era of the 19th century, much could not be said about a cultural identity on the island. Still being a part of a Dutch colonial territory at the time, as well as not having political or economic autonomy (Curacao was the center of commerce, cultural life, and political management of the Netherland Antilles at the time), the small population of Aruba consisted mostly of farmers and fishermen, tending to their crops and their cattle, or going out to fish to provide for their family. As Quito Nicolaas states in his article *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* (Literary History of Aruba: Cultural Life), "during the pre-industrial period, there were no significant economic activity that could have created a cultural ambience, with only one way to generate profit at the time for the subexistence of Aruban families."

It wasn't until the introduction of the Lago Refinery in San Nicolas in 1928, that the island saw a small boom in cultural manifes-



tations and entertainment, as farmers left the 'cunucu' (country) life to work in the refinery, which resulted in Aruba acquiring a different economic pillar. Before this, entertainment and cultural manifestations were mostly experienced by local parishes and the island's elite, who often partook in cultural and entertaining activities around the island, like going to the movie theater or coming together to share poetry on Sundays

after church.

Literary life

Throughout the 19th century and up until the 1940s, there were also not much trace of a cultural climate for the cultural-literary sector on the island. Primary education was introduced on the island in the mid-19th century, followed by secondary and higher education around the late 30's and 40's. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the introduction

of the E.R.N.A agreement in 1951 and the signing of the Statute in 1954, which allowed more space for and control over the economic and cultural development of Aruba, that the literary life on the island began to grow substantially compared to decades before. This was in response to local institutions established in the 1940s for cultural and literary growth on the island, but that did not yet capture the attention of the general public. The 1950 brought with it a boom of literary production on the island, like those of V.S. Piterella, as well as migrant authors José Ramón Vicioso y Rings William Rufus, who have also contributed to the literary development on the island. The literary movement was further promoted by local broadcasters Voz di Aruba and Radio Kelkboom, with their regular broadcast of

literary works.

The 50s and 60s also saw the influence of international cultures, especially that of the United States. During this time, because of international influences as well as the continued prosperity of the oil refinery, cultural traditions in Aruba began to really take form and become widespread, as different worldly and local concepts were introduced in the Aruban society. With the establishment of local television broadcast station Tele-Aruba in 1963, and with time and possibilities, local programs such as "Nos Tera" ("Our Land") started to pay more attention to the Aruban culture and worked to form a cultural consciousness within the community. The 1960s also saw the rise of local authors and artists, who were more comfortable in producing works in our native tongue, Papiamentu, but who also produced works in Spanish, English and Dutch. This new phenomenon was in response to the interaction between economic growth, individual prosperity, cultural life and literary expression.

The 21st century

Nowadays, international influence on our culture is still prevalent, especially those from Latin America, the United States and The Netherlands. Nevertheless, there also exists a strong cultural identity and traditions that are exclusive to the Aruban culture, often manifesting during traditional celebrations, like Dia di San Juan/ Dera Gai (St. John's Day), Dia di Himno y Bandera (National Hymn and Flag Day), Camping during Easter and much more. With the surge of social media in the last decade, artistic voices, especially those of the younger generation, has become even more prevalent and easily accessible to the community of Aruba through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. □

Source: *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* by J.R. "Quito" Nicolaas



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CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 41 Puzo
1 Flight cost subject
5 Best 42 Writer
Picture Canetti
winner 43 Tear
in 2013 44 Pants part

9 Trivial

10 Sentence subjects

12 Painter Degas

13 Racket

14 Contemporary

16 Box office sales, in Variety

17 — Aviv

18 Filing concern

20 Clog

22 Bauxite and galena

23 Wrong

25 Play start

28 "Taken" star

32 Not in time

34 Stage signal

35 Angled pipe

36 Reason to get dressed up

38 Similar

40 — up (hid out)

DOWN

1 Act

2 "Measure for Measure"

3 Wander

4 Book typo

5 Wing

6 Aussie

7 Rock

8 Like some training

9 Ham and lamb

11 Perennial

15 Draw on

19 Token of love

21 Sandbox

24 Is furious

25 Top players

26 Shirt part

27 Popular toast

29 Justice Antonin

30 Beat in a hot dog contest

31 Calls for

33 In the lead

37 Distribute

39 Relatives

2-17

AXYDLBAAXR

is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-17

CRYPTOQUOTE

LME XIIGA BEPI LMIX ZER'PI

QEN BEK? NMIZ SENM

ANYXW, SRN EXBZ EXI

NUANIA QEEG. — "NMI

JUDPIBERA JDA. JUYAIB"

Cryptoquote: TO US, FAMILY MEANS PUTTING YOUR ARMS AROUND EACH OTHER AND BEING THERE BARRARA RICH



Cruise ship Schedule: February 11 - 18 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	11	CARNIVAL MAGIC	09.00	22.00	C	1
WED	12	SEA CLOUD SPIRIT	08.00	14.00	G	1
		GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
THU	13	SEVEN SEAS NAVIGATOR	07.00	17.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN JADE	07.00	20.00	C	1
		MARELLA DISCOVERY	08.00	20.00	I	1
SAT	15	MAJESTIC PRINCESS	07.00	16.00	B	1
		AIDAPERLA	08.00	18.00	C	1
		STAR PRIDE	06.00	18.00	I	1
MON	17	RESILIENT LADY	09.00	23.59	C	1
TUE	18	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN VIVA	13.00	21.00	I	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

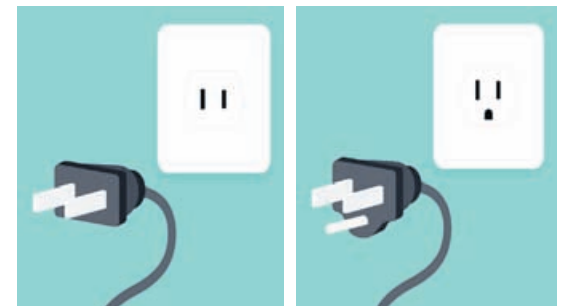
The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



Very cold weather is coming. U.S. about to get 10th and chilliest polar vortex this winter



A person walks along the shore of ice covered Lake Michigan, Feb. 13, 2025, in Chicago.

Associated Press

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**
AP Science Writer

The coldest burst of Arctic air this season is coming to put an icy exclamation point on America's winter of repeated polar vortex invasions, meteorologists warn. And it will stay frozen there all next week. Different weather forces in the Arctic are combining to push the chilly air that usually stays near the North Pole not just into the United States, but also Europe, several meteorologists tell The Associated Press. This will be the 10th time this winter that the polar vortex which keeps the coldest of Arctic air penned in at the top of the world stretches like a rubber band to send some of that big chill south, said Judah Cohen, seasonal forecast director at the private firm Atmo-

spheric and Environmental Research. In a normal winter, it happens maybe two or three times. This winter, with record snow in New Orleans and drought and destructive wildfires in Southern California, has not been normal. The latest projected cold outbreak should first hit the northern Rockies and northern Plains Saturday and then stick around all next week. The cold will likely concentrate east of the Rockies with only the far American west and central and southern Florida exempted, meteorologists said. On Tuesday, expect the Lower 48 states to have an average low of 16.6 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 8.6 Celsius), and then plunge to 14 degrees (minus 10 Celsius) on Wednesday,

calculated private meteorologist Ryan Maue, a former National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration chief scientist. Sometime next week, 89% of the contiguous United States will be below the freezing mark and 27% of the Lower 48 will be below zero (minus 18 degrees Celsius), according to National Weather Service forecasts.

Meteorologists expect strong winds to make the cold feel even worse. Every U.S. state but Hawaii, California and Florida have some or all parts forecast to have a good chance of windchills of 20 degrees or below sometime next week, the National Weather Service predicted. Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and Iowa will have "probably the most impressive" cold, with temperatures as much as 35 degrees (19 degrees Celsius) below what's normal for this

time of year, said Zack Taylor, a meteorologist at the weather service's Weather Prediction Center. NOAA weather models predict Wednesday lows below zero in Oklahoma, Colorado, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. □



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Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
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San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Eagle: Tel. 587 9011

San Nicolas:

San Nicolas: Tel. 584 5712

OTHER

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

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Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
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Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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American Airlines	582 2700
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Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

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FAVI- Visually Impaired	Tel. 582 5051
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Narcotics Anonymous	Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional	Tel. 583 5400
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At 50, 'Saturday Night Live' celebrates its past as a comedy icon and wonders about its future

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Tune into the Oct. 11, 1975 premiere episode of "Saturday Night Live" then without "live" in its name and you may be instantly surprised at some of the bones of the show that are still intact today. There's the cold open skit, featuring cast members John Belushi and Michael O'Donoghue. At its end, Chevy Chase gingerly walks by the prone bodies of the two actors, playing dead, for the very first call of "Live from New York, it's Saturday night!"

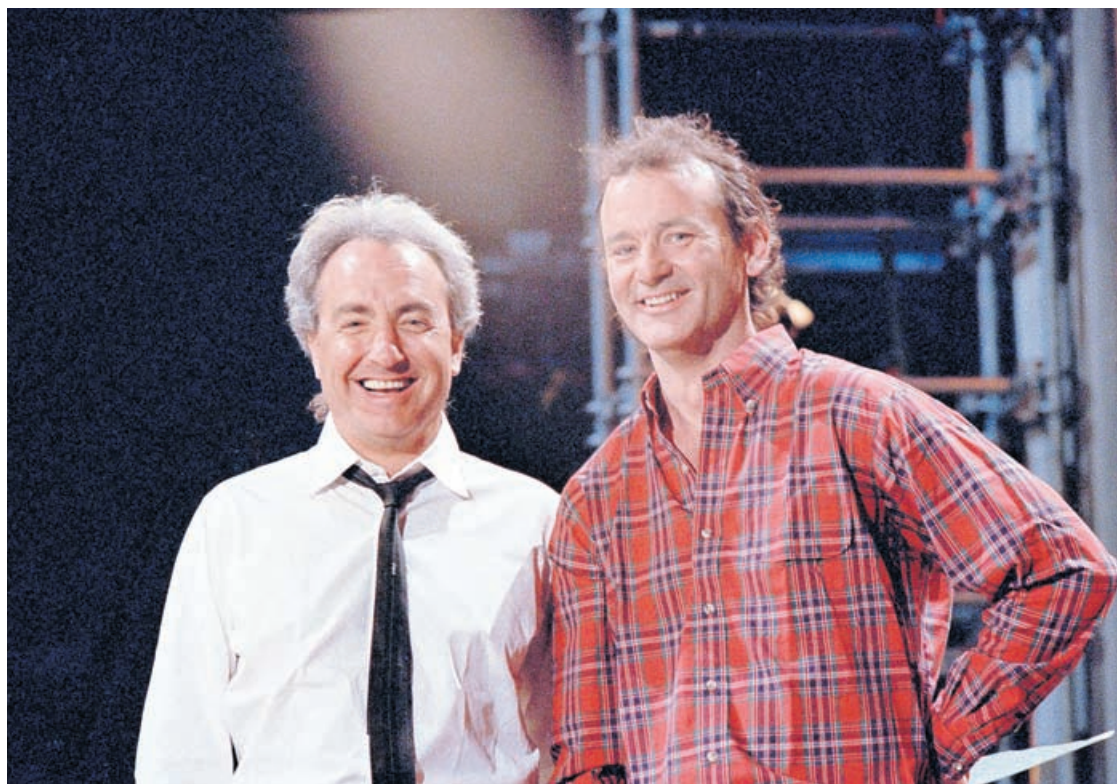
NBC is rebroadcasting that episode Saturday, part of a feast of 50th anniversary programming that includes a three-hour special on Sunday reuniting dozens of past cast members and friends and a homecoming concert from Radio City Music Hall being livestreamed Friday night on Peacock.

The original cast surely would have mocked the display of showbiz excess, much like the actors in last year's fictional backstage depiction of opening night in the movie "Saturday Night" couldn't hide their disgust at Hollywood legend Milton Berle.

Not ready for prime time? Hardly

Back then, they were known as the Not Ready for Prime Time Players. Success has long since made a mockery of that name. Among viewers under age 50, the late-night show is more popular than anything NBC airs in so-called prime time, and that doesn't even reflect the way many people experience it now, through highlight clips online.

"Saturday Night Live" is the engine of comedy, minting generations of stars from Belushi to Bill Murray to Eddie Murphy to Adam Sandler to Will Ferrell to Amy Poehler to Kristen Wiig to Kate McKinnon to Bowen Yang. It launched movie franchises too numerous to mention, and NBC's late-night comedy lineup of Jimmy Fallon and Seth Meyers traces its



"Saturday Night Live" host Bill Murray, a former cast member, is pictured with producer Lorne Michaels, left, during rehearsals on March 19, 1987, in New York.

Associated Press

lineage to "SNL." It's still the first place people turn when they want to make comedic sense of current affairs.

At its center, then and now, is the inscrutable figure of Lorne Michaels, the executive producer who was 30 during that first season and turned 80 last fall on a show night, naturally.

Michaels left "SNL" for five years and, upon his return in 1985, hit upon the formula that guaranteed its continued relevance.

He recognized, as author Susan Morrison writes in the biography "Lorne: The Man Who Invented Saturday Night Live," due to be released Tuesday, that "just about every person who has ever watched SNL believes that its funniest years were the ones when they were in high school."

That means constantly moving forward, always adding new blood, even being ruthless about it. That means trusting young writers to keep the cultural references relevant, and invent new ones. That means booking musical acts that Michaels and his good friend, singer Paul Simon, probably haven't heard of but his people tell him are on the cutting edge.

It's not perfect. It never was.

"The history of the show reads like an EKG," said James Andrew Miller, co-author with Tom Shales of the 2002 book, "Live From New York: The Complete, Uncensored History of Saturday Night Live." "There are fantastic years, there are growing years, there are years to make you carsick, there are years to make you wonder if it should still be going on." Substitute the word "shows" for "years" in that quote, and it still makes sense.

Creating viral moments before 'viral' was a thing

"Saturday Night Live" is often usually wildly uneven. But it produced viral moments before the internet existed. Garrett Morris' news for the hard of hearing, Murphy's irascible Gumby, "Lazy Sunday," the cowbell sketch, Tina Fey's impersonation of Sarah Palin: The memories alone produce laughs. The duds, the ideas that never took off or hosts who couldn't rise to the challenge fade away. Or maybe they're the price of genius.

It can be easy to lose sight of how hard this actually is, said Bill Carter, veteran chronicler of television

comedy and author of "The Late Shift: Letterman, Leno, and the Network Battle for the Night." A 90-minute program is written from scratch every week, sets are constructed in a New York office building, hosts of various degrees of talent accommodated.

Ready or not, the show must go on Saturday at 11:30 p.m. The clock is unforgiving.

"It's a different creative enterprise, every show," Carter said. "That's why it is good and bad, but it's also why it's exciting ... 'Live,' that is the essential feature of the show. You know when you are watching that it is actually happening in New York City right now."

Only so much polish is possible. Someone may flub a line, or get the giggles. Si-néad O'Connor may rip up a picture of the pope, or Ashlee Simpson's lip-sync might fail.

"Saturday Night Live" has leaned more into its history in recent years. Alumni make frequent reappearances, and spotting unbilled cameos has become sport. The Five-Timers Club of guest hosts, while a joke, treads the line of smugness. It may seem like a fran-

chise with no foreseeable conclusion, and is even built for that. Michaels will have more to say about that than anyone. The backstage boss is also the longest-running on-screen character; his appearance as a straight man to then-New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani on the first show after the Sept. 11 attacks is one of "SNL's" most poignant moments.

"Can we be funny?" Michaels asked.

Replied Giuliani: "Why start now?"

How long will Lorne Michaels stay with the show?

Observers say Michaels has stepped back a bit, relying more on the capable team that he's built. There's no indication that his eye for spotting talent has diminished. Those who have seen it say that his most fearsome skill making a series of instant decisions between the show's dress rehearsal and performance, shortening or lengthening skits, moving and changing them to produce the broadcast viewers see is flourishing.

The years leading up to the 50th anniversary have been filled with speculation that this will be when he steps down, talk he's even fueled himself in the past. But he hasn't discussed it, or even given interviews surrounding the festivities. The subject is the focus of "After Lorne," a new piece in New York magazine, where author Reeves Wiedeman describes Michaels as a man of mystery, sometimes an intimidating force, to those around the show.

Whoever replaces him names like Fey, Meyers and Colin Jost have been mentioned would likely face crushing pressure. At a time when broadcast television is fading, NBC would be sorely tempted to cut costs around the program in a way they haven't with Michaels in charge, Miller said.

If the 50th anniversary were to trigger his exit, Carter said that likely would be known by now. □

Trump orders U.S. to ditch the penny. What's its connection to NASCAR's most impactful Daytona 500?

By **DAN GELSTON**
AP Sports Writer
DAYTONA BEACH, Fla (AP)

— Cease production of the penny, let collectors gobble up what's left of the 1 cent coin, and there will still be one eternally glued to Dale Earnhardt's old Chevrolet, the luckiest piece of loose change in NASCAR history.

The penny was doomed into obscurity after President Donald Trump this week directed the Treasury Department to stop minting new ones, citing the rising cost of producing the coin.

The memories that linger of Earnhardt, 24 years after his death in the 2001 Daytona 500, and of the penny given to him by a 6-year-old girl ahead of his 1998 Daytona 500 victory, are priceless to those who were there for one of NASCAR's seminal moments.

"I know," Earnhardt crew chief Larry McReynolds said this week, when asked if he heard of the penny's impending demise, "the '98 lucky penny."

Lucky, indeed.

At that point, Earnhardt, even with his seven NASCAR championships, was a victim of bad luck, missed



Larry McReynolds, crew chief for NASCAR Xfinity Series driver Jeffrey Earnhardt walks to the pit before the start of the Ag-Pro 300 at Talladega Superspeedway, Saturday, April 23, 2022, in Talladega, Ala.

opportunities and close calls that stamped him 0 for 19 in NASCAR's biggest race.

Earnhardt was NASCAR's "Intimidator," a nickname earned for a fierce driving style and a relentless pursuit of the checkered flag that fueled his Hall of Fame career.

Winning the Daytona 500 was the only milestone that eluded Earnhardt over the

first two decades of his career.

Earnhardt had a number of fluky failures in the race. In 1997, with 10 laps to go and running near the front, he was involved in a late crash that sent his car flipping down on the backstretch. In 1993, Dale Jarrett passed him for the lead on the last lap.

In 1991, he obliterated a seagull on the backstretch,

damaging his radiator and forcing him to pit for repairs. In 1990, he cut a tire less than mile from the finish line, allowing Derrike Cope to steal one of his two career victories.

Earnhardt long boasted one of the best teams in NASCAR driving for team owner Richard Childress. Who knew he needed a little girl and her penny to finally win Daytona?

Earnhardt credited 6-year-old Wessa Miller for helping him get that elusive win. He met Miller through the Make-A-Wish Foundation following the final practice for the race. Miller gave Earnhardt the penny and told him she had rubbed it and that it would bring him good luck. As she handed it to him, he said he hoped so.

Earnhardt brushed past McReynolds in the garage and started digging through his tool box and drawers looking for a weather-strip adhesive that was often used to glue lug nuts on the wheels. Earnhardt essentially traded his helmet for a hard hat and went to work sticking that penny on the dash of the No. 3.

"He had enough glue to glue a dollar's worth of pennies on," McReynolds said. "It was running down the sleeve of his uniform. Finally I said, 'if I help you glue this penny on the dash, can we get down to business and talk about this race car?'"

Whether it was the penny, the racing Gods finally on their side, or maybe Earnhardt was just that damn good, he finally won the Daytona 500. □

Associated Press

Steph vs. Sabrina, the big hit of All-Star weekend last year, won't happen this year

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP Basketball Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — There will be no Stephen Curry vs. Sabrina Ionescu rematch at All-Star weekend.

The NBA announced Thursday that the 3-point shooting event bringing together two of the biggest stars in the NBA and WNBA which was one of the highlights of last year's All-Star weekend in Indianapolis is not going to be part of the lineup in San Francisco. Talks went on for weeks to try to make it happen, even stretching into All-Star week itself. It seemed more than logical that a rematch would occur; All-Star weekend is on Curry's home floor this weekend and Ionescu who plays for the WNBA champion New York Liberty is a Bay Area native who grew up watching Curry and the Golden State Warriors.

"We weren't able to land on a plan we thought would raise the bar off of last year's special moment," NBA spokesman

Mike Bass said. "We all agreed not to proceed and will instead keep the focus on All-Star Sunday's new format."

Curry was on record saying he wanted the rematch to occur, and there were talks of making it a 2-on-2 format this year — potentially involving Klay Thompson, Curry's former Warriors teammate, and reigning WNBA rookie of the year Caitlin Clark.

The 2-on-2 talks seemed to fall apart in recent weeks, though the NBA had hope of bringing some form of Curry vs. Ionescu back potentially even including it in Sunday night's lineup between games of the new All-Star Game mini-tournament and not having it be part of All-Star Saturday like it was a year ago.

"We've been talking about finding different ways to change this up next year," Ionescu said after last year's event when she and Curry both made clear, at the time, that they wanted to bring the competition back this year. □



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry and New York Liberty guard Sabrina Ionescu pose for photos following their competition at the NBA basketball All-Star weekend, Saturday, Feb. 17, 2024, in Indianapolis.

Associated Press

Eugenie Bouchard crosses over to the pro pickleball circuit, tennis still remains in her plans

By **PAT GRAHAM**
AP Sports Writer

Eugenie Bouchard already has her own signature pickleball paddle. She's No. 17 in the pickleball rankings and constantly appears on the main court at events because she's always a big draw.

Just to be absolutely clear, though, she's not retired from tennis. The 2014 Wimbledon finalist still practices on the tennis court, still competes at tennis events and still has a Women's Tennis Association ranking (currently No. 1,288).

The Canadian standout just has a new sport that's caught her attention. Bouchard is one of several familiar tennis names like Jack Sock and Donald Young crossing over to the pro pickleball scene in another chapter of their careers.

Bouchard's year-long changeover has been filled with lumps and losses in a very public setting as she learns the ins and outs drop shots are a good thing of a game that combines elements of tennis, badminton and table tennis.

"I'm on center court,"



In this image provided by the Carvana PPA Tour, professional tennis player Eugenie Bouchard plays a shot during a pickleball match, Oct. 10, 2024, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

Bouchard explained ahead of "Pickleball Slam 3," where she will team up with Andy Roddick on Sunday to take on Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf in a series of matches played in Las Vegas and aired on ESPN. "Not because of my skill level in pickleball but because of what I achieved in tennis and what I'm bringing over from tennis to the pickleball

world. "I didn't like it at first because I was losing and I felt uncomfortable and awkward on the pickleball court. It was like, 'Put me on the last court so no one sees the train wreck that's about to happen.' But I've slowly found my footing." Bouchard, who turns 31 on Feb. 25, was first ap-

proached by the Professional Pickleball Association Tour in 2023 while at the U.S. Open. The pitch to Bouchard: Help grow pickleball. Bouchard had played the sport with friends, but that was about it. "After we got off the phone, I was like, 'She can make a difference in pickleball. She can really help

bring us to another level as far as eyeballs,'" explained Connor Pardoe, the founder and CEO of the Carvana PPA Tour. "When we understood that this is something Genie felt she can make a difference in and something that she really wanted to pursue and she wanted to give full effort, for us it was a no-brainer."

Bouchard signed a three-year deal terms were not disclosed that included provisions so she can compete in tennis events.

She's played a role in the popularity of the PPA Tour, which merged with Major League Pickleball in February 2024. The circuits saw more than 320,000 fans attend PPA Tour and MLP events last year.

Bouchard's still looking for her first win on the tour. But she maintains her sense of humor and style.

Case in point: After her exit last weekend in Tucson, Arizona, Bouchard, who was playing in a yellow New Balance top and a green-patterned skirt, wrote on social media: "I may not have won the tournament but at least I had the cutest outfit." □

Dolphins release veteran running back Raheem Mostert, AP source says

By **ALANIS THAMES**
AP Sports Writer
MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP)

— The Miami Dolphins are moving on from veteran running back Raheem Mostert, his agent Brett Tessler said Friday.

"Looks like my client Raheem Mostert will be playing elsewhere next season," Tessler posted on social media. "Very thankful for his time with the Miami Dolphins, and this gives them a chance to get younger and gives him a chance to pursue a ring elsewhere."

A person familiar with the move said the team has released the Pro Bowl running back.

The person spoke on condi-

tion of anonymity because Miami has not made an official announcement. Mostert finished the 2024 season with his fewest

games played (13), rushing yards (278) and attempts (85) since he joined the team ahead of the 2022 season.



Miami Dolphins running back Raheem Mostert (31) carries the ball during an NFL football game against the San Francisco 49ers, Sunday, Dec. 22, 2024, in Miami Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press

Mostert had one year left on his contract after signing an extension last March, coming off a highly productive season in 2023 in which he ran for a career-high 1,012 yards and 18 touchdowns.

The Dolphins will clear \$2.9 million in cap space with the move.

Mostert played for four teams over his first two seasons before landing with San Francisco in 2016. After six seasons with the 49ers, including a trip to the Super Bowl after the 2019 season, Mostert followed coach Mike McDaniels to Miami on a one-year deal, where he had the two most productive years of his career. Mostert led Mi-

ami in rushing in 2022 with 891 yards. In 2023, Mostert became the Dolphins' first 1,000-yard rusher since Jay Ajayi had 1,272 in 2016. He was also the first player to rush for 1,000 yards in his 30s since Adrian Peterson ran for 1,042 with Washington in 2018 at 33.

Mostert's NFL career started with the Dolphins in 2015. He had two kickoff returns in a game against Jacksonville that season, didn't play again, got waived and wound up with Baltimore and Cleveland later that year.

De'Von Achane emerged as Miami's clear RB1 in 2024, with a team-high 907 yards rushing on 203 carries and six touchdowns. □